THE ANTIQUE STATUES OF THE VILLA

From Cardinal Ippolito's day onwards, the statues adorning the Villa d'Este were considered one of the major drawing cards and wonders of the whole villa, for both quantity and artistic worth. In these pages, however, we shall not go into a discussion of the numerous statues created by the artists who were contemporaries of the Cardinal. Their sculptures in travertine, peperino, stucco, and terracotta made up (and in many cases still do) a large part of the fountain decoration.

The antique statues are of much greater importance. The documents which have enabled us to draw up an approximative inventory of these treasures are preserved in the State Archives of Modena. Published by Seni, they were amplified by Zappi and later by Del Re. Lastly, Ashby's methodic fruitful research has proved extremely helpful.

Document no. 6 of the Modena Archives contains the inventory reproduced below. Its major interest lies in the quotations given for the pieces.

Greek marble bust depicting Meleager, unsual antique work of excellent workmanship (now in the Capitoline Museum)	1000	*scudi*
Antique Greek marble statue of a naked Venus (?)	400	»
Two antique, fake marble statues of Amazons of fine and elegant workmanship (now in the Capitoline)	800	»
Another antique Greek marble statue of excellent workmanship and with fine drapery, named Ion (Capitoline)	350	»
Statue of Abundance, with exquisite drapery in dark antique marble and hands in white marble, of excellent workmanship (?)	200	»
Ancient Egyptian basalt statue with dark hair, 10 *palmi* high, unique piece (Louvre)	2000	»
Exquisite antique statue of a faun in Greek marble of extraordinary workmanship (Capitoline)	400	»
Another antique statue of a faun similar to above, but damaged (?)	250	»
Extraordinary antique statue in Parian marble depicting a Cupid, perfectly executed Greek work	2000	»
Another statue in the same marble, like the one above but of less perfect workmanship	400	»
Statue of Pallas, 9 *palmi* high, in Parian marble wearing a paludament with a shield and holding a spear and lorica decorated with the head of the Gorgon, fine antique workmanship (Capitoline)	1000	»
Life-size statue of Diana the huntress shooting an arrow with a dog at her heels, outstanding Greek work (Capitoline)	1000	»
Antique statue, 11 *palmi* high, of Hercules completely nude with a lion's skin over his head: in his left hand he is supporting his son whose mother was the nymph Augus, near the deer who is nursing the child, while in his right hand he is holding a club; antique piece of fine workmanship, and all carved from a single block (Louvre)	600	»
Antique statue of Pandora, about 10 *palmi* high, well-draped, showing her carrying the fabulous box of evils with her hand wrapped in her paludament (Capitoline)	200	»
Antique statue of Jupiter seated, holding a thunderbolt, about 10 *palmi*, of competent workmanship (Ince)	400	»
Antique white marble statue and another life-size statue of a Nymph with butterfly wings; fine, but damaged, work (Capitoline)	150	»
Another statue, like the one above, of a seated Nymph, but even more damaged (?)	60	»
Large-sized antique statue of Mars, about nine *palmi* high, beautifully carved in white marble (Ince)	200	»
Three other similar antique statues in the same marble depicting pileated freedmen at 80 scudi each (Ince)	240	»
Another marble statue resting upon a tripod wholly carved with bas-reliefs of foliage and grapevine designs with in the center a wholly fluted and ornamented column, and several seahorses depicted upon the basin, antique piece of excellent workmanship	300	»
	11950	*scudi*

This first inventory gives some idea of the importance and value of the statues then belonging to the villa, but later documents prove that the number of statues was considerably increased after the Cardinal's death, especially during the time of Cardinal Alessandro.

From Del Re's description we learn that the Secret Garden contained a Venus with a cupid astride the dolphin at her feet, a Venus leaving the bath, a statue of Ceres with a torch, a Vestal Virgin,